



Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network

Identifying and Addressing Learning Disabilities In the New Jersey TANF Population



September 14-15, 2006
Trenton, New Jersey

September 14, 2006

8:30 – 8:50 AM

Registration and Networking Session

9:00 – 9:30 AM

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Mary Ann Higgins, Regional Administrator, Region II, Administration for Children and Families, Department of Health and Human Services

Jeanette Page Hawkins, M.S.W., Director, Division of Family Development, NJ Department of Human Services

Lisa Washington-Thomas, Federal Project Officer, Welfare Peer TA Network, Office of Family Assistance, Administration for Children and Families, Department of Health and Human Services

9:30 - 10:15 AM

Overview Presentation - Learning Disabilities in a WorkFirst Environment

Nancie Payne, M.S., President, Payne & Associates, Inc.

June Justice Crawford, M.ED., Special Program Officer, Adult

Reading and Learning Disabilities, National Institute for Literacy

José A. Rivera, J.D., Project Director, Welfare Peer TA Network - Facilitator

Nancie Payne will present a vision for how agencies charged with addressing learning disabilities can do so from an empowerment rather than a deficit model perspective and how case managers can help integrate people with learning disabilities into today's workforce.

June Crawford will focus the vision in the context of Federal and State legal and policy requirements relative to accommodating the special needs of people with learning disabilities.

10:15 - 10:30 AM

Break

10:30 - 11:30 AM

Understanding Learning Disabilities

Molly Vera, Director – L.I.V.E.S. WNY, Learning Disabilities
Association of Western NY

Melody Kelley, Learning Disabilities Coordinator, Alameda County
Social Services Agency

Molly Vera will provide baseline information regarding disabilities, introducing their presentation, with a presentation regarding common myths and biases relative to people with learning disabilities. Included in this presentation will be information showing how learning disabilities develop and how learning disabilities can co-occur with other issues such as domestic violence, substance abuse and the like.

Melody Kelley will explain how Alameda County currently addresses the needs of the TANF population with learning disabilities.

11:30 – 12:00 Noon

Interactive Exercise

Participants at each table will be asked to agree upon five elements which the group believes needs to be considered when working with Work First TANF participants with learning disabilities.

Noon - 1:00 PM

Working Session

Guest Speaker to be announced.

1:00 - 1:15 PM

Feedback Session

Lisa Washington-Thomas, Federal Project Officer, Welfare Peer TA
Network, Office of Family Assistance, Administration for Children
and Families, Department of Health and Human Services

Participants will be given an opportunity to share thoughts regarding the morning presentations.

1:15 - 2:00 PM

Screening for Learning Disabilities

Nancie Payne, President, Payne & Associates, Inc.
Molly Vera, Director – L.I.V.E.S. WNY, Learning Disabilities
Association of Western NY
Jeannette M. Hercik, Ph.D., Deputy Director, Welfare Peer TA
Network - Facilitator

Nancie Payne will look at the specific work that case managers must do in screening TANF and SAIF participants for learning disabilities. Special emphasis will be placed on the short form Payne Screening Survey and other tested vehicles for conducting a layperson screening of people perceived as having a learning disability.

Molly Vera will address the special needs of the Spanish speaking community and introduce her Spanish language screening instrument.

2:00 - 2:30 PM

Interactive Exercise

Jeannette M. Hercik, Ph.D., Deputy Director, Welfare Peer TA
Network - Facilitator

Participants will be asked to conduct a mock interview of a staff person who will play the role of a Work First participant with learning disabilities who is being given their 12 month comprehensive screening. Each table will report their findings to the group.

2:30 - 2:45 PM

Break

2:45 - 3:30 PM

The Role of the Clinical Assessment

Marcie Sitton, Assessment and Evaluation Coordinator, Vocational
Rehabilitation Program, Georgia Department of Labor

Marcie Sitton will focus on the clinical tests and activities that are conducted once a person is screened or referred for possible learning disabilities and the implications of a learning disabilities diagnosis.

3:30 - 4:30 PM

Best Practices Panel on Service Accommodations

Nancie Payne, Marcie Sitton and Melody Kelley, as a panel, will look at the definition of and the implementation strategies associated with service accommodations for TANF clients with learning disabilities.

4:30 PM

Session Round-up

Barbara DeGraaf, Assistant Director, Office of County Operations,
Division of Family Development, NJ Department of Human Services
José Rivera, J.D., Welfare Peer TA Network

September 15, 2006

8:00 - 9:00 AM

Networking Session

9:00 - 10:00 AM

Work Related Accommodations for Learning Disabilities

Marcie Sitton, Assessment and Evaluation Coordinator, Vocational
Rehabilitation Program, Georgia Department of Labor
Melody Kelley, Learning Disabilities Coordinator, Alameda County
Social Services Agency
Nancie Payne, President, Payne & Associates, Inc.

José A. Rivera, J.D., Project Director, Welfare Peer TA Network -
Facilitator

Marcie Sitton, Melody Kelley and Nancie Payne will each address best
practice strategies used to assist people diagnosed with learning
disabilities to access the marketplace of work and will discuss the
types of work accommodations appropriate to learning disabilities.

The One Stop Center participants will be engaged as a group to
discuss what work accommodations they have made in their practice
and what they would now consider making in light of the previous
presentations.

10:00 - 10:45 AM

Working with Learning Disability Partners

Jacqueline Collins, NJ Department of Labor and Workforce
Development, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
Margaret Sumbry-Draughn, NJ Department of Labor and Workforce
Development, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

Representatives from the NJ Department of Labor the NJ Department
of Vocational Rehabilitation will address ways that participants can
partner with their respective agencies in order to assist Work First
customers with learning disabilities.

10:45 - 11:00 AM

Break

11:00 – 12:00 Noon

Retrospective Post-then-Pre Test and Evaluation

Audrea Dunham, Ph.D., Division of Family Development, NJ
Department of Human Services

Participants will be engaged in an exercise designed to examine the lessons learned and knowledge gained as a result of the program. A program evaluation would also be filled out by participants.

12:00 PM

Closing Remarks

Jeanette Page Hawkins, M.S.W., Director, Division of Family
Development, NJ Department of Human Services
Lisa Washington-Thomas, Federal Project Officer, Welfare Peer TA
Network, Office of Family Assistance, Administration for Children
and Families